



A PEOPLE'S ARTIST'S PUBLICATION - VOL 1 #7 DECEMBER 1950

SING OUT!

• SONGS FOR CHRISTMAS & CHANUKAH •
SONG BY JOE HILL • A NEW SONG FOR PEACE

Correspondence



Dear Editor:

Enclosed please find a check for two dollars for a subscription to your monthly publication. I think the songs are fine. I'm not a professional singer but I know that songs are an important contribution to the work of the progressive movement. I enjoy singing and I'll try to learn some of these songs and pass on their fighting spirit to my friends.

Yvonne Gonda
San Francisco

Dear Editor:

I must ask you please to cancel my subscription to your publication, **SING OUT!** "Take This Hammer" (sic) expressed a fine spirit. . . . The addition of a sickle has spoiled it, and I no longer wish to be associated with your organization.

Sincerely Yours,
Arthur B. Silverstein
Brooklyn, N. Y.

(Betty Sanders, People's Artists' delegate to the World Peace Congress, sent a long letter to People's Artists, parts of which are re-printed here.)

Dear People's Artists:

There's much to be said for the trip, though I've decided very hard to fly home. There are eight of us aboard. There's a kid who got 6,000 signatures to the World Peace Appeal and is cursing the day he went out for them. He's been sick or asleep the whole trip. And there's me who sings with the various Scotsmen, Irishmen, and Welshmen at the bar almost every night. They're amazed that there are people like us in America. During their visit to the U. S. they found no indication of any peace movement there.

The trip itself has offered us all kinds of weather from a few beautiful sunny mornings and clear nights, to

storms that make the upper decks impassable to all but folk singers and fools.

The ship's paper warns that we are likely to be embarrassed if we go out of our class. But having had sufficient training at home I remain impervious and have occasionally gone above to play deck tennis, swim, or press my hungry face against the first class dining room window.

I've no concrete idea of what's in store for me, but I'm awfully excited and quite certain that I'll find enough to bring back to warrant your having sent me.

ANNOUNCEMENT

Due to changes in administrative and editorial personnel, it has been impossible to publish the November issue of **SING OUT** on time. The editorial board has therefore decided to label the current issue "December", to enable us to catch up on our schedule. However, it will remain Vol. 1, No. 7, so that all subscribers will still receive 12 issues in their year's subscription.

Sing Out

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45 BREAK BREAD TOGETHER

As sung by Laura Duncan and transcribed by Serge Hovey

A song of the Negro people, of comradeship and thanksgiving. The "rising sun" symbolizes the dawn of a new day -- freedom! Sing it slowly with the strength and dignity it merits.

Slow and Strong

Let us break bread to - geth - er on our
 knees Let us break bread to -
 geth - er on our knees, When I
 fall on my knees with my face to the ris - ing
 sun, Oh Lord, have mer - cy if you please!

2. Let us drink wine together, etc.

3. We shall all stand together in that morning, etc.

(add your own verses, such as "All Sing together", etc.)

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Lively

G C

A7 D7 G

C G

There are wom - en of man - y de - scrip - tions
 Yes, her hands may be hard - en'd from la - bor

G7 C Cm G

----- In this queer world as ev - ery one knows
 And her dress may not be ve - ry fine.

C G

----- Some are liv - ing in beau - ti - ful man - sions
 But a heart in her bo - som is beat - ing

A7 D

And are wear - ing the fin - est of clothes.
 Warm and true to her class and her kind.

D7 G C

There are blue - blood - ed queens and prin -
 And the graft - ers in ter - ror are

G G7 C

cess - es who have charms made of
 tremb - ling when her spite and de -

B G E7

dia - monds and pearls. But the on - ly and
 fi - ance she'll hurl. For the on - ly and

Am

Thor - ough - bred La - dy is the
 Thor - ough - bred La - dy is the

Reb el girl
Reb el girl

Chorus:

That's the Reb - el Girl, That's the Reb - el
Girl, To the work - ing class she's a
pre - cious pearl. She brings Cour - age, Pride and
Joy ----- To the fight - ing Reb - el
Boy ----- We've had girls be - fore, But we
need some more in the IN - dus - trial
Work - ers of the World ----- For it's
great to fight for Free - dom
with a Reb - el Girl

When the copper bosses framed Joe Hill on a murder charge and executed him on Nov. 19, 1915, they thought that they had silenced the famous "Singing Wobbly".

Today, thirty-five years later, as we mark the occasion of Joe Hill's death, we realize just how wrong the bosses were. It is doubtful whether Joe Hill himself had any idea of the lasting value of his work. For like so many other real "people's art-

ists", his work was produced for the needs of the moment -- and in the final sense, it is this which makes them last.

We still sing "Casey Jones", "Pie In the Sky", "Hallelujah I'm A Bum", and other songs by Joe Hill. Here is one of the most famous of his tunes, "The Rebel Girl", dedicated to the then youthful Wobbly woman leader -- Elizabeth Gurley Flynn.

HOW TO WRITE A SONG

This is the second article taken from a discussion involving Bob and Adrienne Claiborne and Helaine Mooney.

HELAINE: How do you go about writing a song?

BOB: The first thing, is to get an approach. As often as not, I've written a chorus or the last clinching line of a verse first. The chorus should kind of sum up the idea of the song. Then you can proceed to write verses that develop the idea.

HELAINE: Do you have to know much about music?

ADRIENNE: I have no musical background at all. When I wrote "Bilbo" it automatically fit itself into a pattern. Then I made an effort to clean up that pattern to be sure it was regular. You can't have one verse of the song using entirely different music from another verse. You have to have some sense of rhythm, but you don't have to know much about music.

BOB: In a good song the words and music fit together, one reinforces the other. Some words sing better than others. You can test that by singing the song aloud for yourself. We need songs that can be sung easily by people who are not professional singers.

BOB: I've found that a song with rhyme is more effective in terms of people remembering it, than a song that doesn't rhyme. However, it's an awful temptation to throw in an extra line, or some extra words that don't have much meaning, just to fill out the metre or to make a rhyme. Work to make sure that every line in the song, every word, pulls its own weight, that nothing is thrown in as filler. There is nothing that can ruin a song quicker.

ADRIENNE: Parodies and zipper songs are easy for a beginner to write. Don't be ashamed of writing parodies. Often they are more useful than any other type of song. You get them out fast and people who can't read music can sing them because they already know the tune. Sometimes the original song will suggest it's own gimmick that you can adapt to your own use.

BOB: The song I've Been Having Some Hard Traveling was rewritten as Put My Name Down for a membership drive of the AVC, and then again as Put My Name Down for the Stockholm Peace Petition drive.

ADRIENNE: But in each case the gimmick used was "I thought you knowed," and "way down the road," adapted to the particular point to be made. Another "easy" song is the zipper song. Roll the Union On is a very familiar one. You have one line that changes in each verse, and you add a lot of lines--you don't even have to worry about rhyme. (Take a look at Roll the Union On in the People's Song Book.)

BOB: The main thing is to write songs--and sing them!



47 IN DEFENSE OF PEACE

English Words - Arthur Kevers

Music - Victor Bieli

A stirring march written in the Soviet Union and already sung and printed in France. This message for peace, with its strength and confidence in the future is a fitting song for the season of "peace on earth".

With Intensity

The musical score is written in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a common time signature (C). It consists of six staves of music. The lyrics are written below the notes. Chord symbols are placed above the notes: Am, F, Am, Dm, G7, C, C7, F, E7, Am, F7, Am, E7 A(maj.), Refrain, A, D, C#, Bm, C#, F#m, B, A, E7, 1. A, 2. A.

We are the mil-lions who live on the earth,
 Longing for peace our day in the sun, We bar the road to the
 mak-ers of war, Let's march to - geth - er till peace won. The in
 mo - tion, We span the o - cean and link our arms across the
 sea. Peace lov - ing peo - ples with one e -
 mo - tion Go for - ward build-ing a world that's free!

Fields were not made for trenches
 to scar,
 This fruitless labor, this horror must
 cease,
 We want to sing of our valleys and
 hills,
 Sing of the glory of love and peace.

Never again will our sons go to war,
 Robbed of their future, their bodies,
 their breath,
 When on this planet as brothers we
 stand,
 We shall be stronger than war and
 death.

Cannon, forgotten, will rust in the
 fields,
 Men, proud and fearless, discover
 their worth,
 Life will be sparkling with color
 and light,
 Long live the season of peace on
 earth!

Courtesy Le
 Chant Du Monde
 English transla-
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48 RISE UP, SHEPHERD AND FOLLOW

A Negro Christmas
Spiritual

The shepherd, the people everywhere, still follow the "star" of peace. But the Negro people in the days of slavery--when this song was written--went further. For the song had a double meaning, and they rose up to "follow the star" to freedom.

With Warmth

There's a star in the East on
Christ-mas morn, Rise up shep-herd and fol-low, It will
lead to the place where the Sav-our's born,
Rise up shep-herd and fol-low. Leave your sheep and
leave your lambs, Rise up shep-herd and fol-low;
Leave your ewes and leave your rams,
Rise up shep-herd and fol-low. Fol-low, Fol-low,
Rise up shep-herd and fol-low. Fol-low the star of
Beth-le-hem, Rise up shep-herd and fol-low.

49

Mi Y'malel

Hebrew "Chanukah" song

"We bend our knee to no man," said the Maccabees. And in honoring the Jewish people's celebration of Chanukah we recall their belief that peace could come only with national liberation.

English words by B. M. Edidin

Music Traditional

Bright and Strong

Mi Y'-ma-lel g'vu-rot Yis-ra-el, O-
 tan mi yim - neh?
 Hen-be-khol dor ya-kum hag-i-bor, go-el ha-am.
 Sh'ma! Ba-ya-mim ha-hem ba-z'mam haz-zeh
 Mak-ka-bi mo-shi-a u-fo-deh
 Uv'-ya-me-nu kol am Yis-ra-el.
 Yit-a-hed, ya-kum ve-yi-ga-el.

RISE UP SHEPHERD AND FOLLOW 2nd Verse:

If you take good heed to the angel's
 words,
 Rise up shepherd and follow,
 You'll forget your flock, you'll
 forget your herds,
 Rise up shepherd and follow.

Who can retell the things that
 befell us,
 Who can count them?
 In every age a hero or sage
 came to our aid.
 Hark! At this time of year
 in days of yore,
 Maccabees the Temple did restore.
 But now all Israel must as one rise,
 Redeem itself through deed and
 sacrifice.

FORMING A CHORUS

—by Ralph Ditchik—

This is the third in a series of articles from a paper by Ralph Ditchik, conductor and composer. He is at present teaching a class and workshop in choral conducting in New York City.

How to sing . . .

A. GENERAL SOURCES OF SINGING DIFFICULTIES (I am concerned in this article not with musical ignorance or lack of musical experience and training, but rather with some of the singing difficulties that arise from miseducation.)

It is clear that these singing difficulties can arise only from generally anti-social, hence anti-singing influences. (see Articles I and II)

1. Anti-social influences translate themselves in the individual through physical and psychological disorders and distortions. These in turn produce difficulties in the ability to reproduce tones and rhythms.

2. Anti-social or anti-singing influences also develop through and into various kinds of institutions, which in turn miseducate the individual.

(a) The "educational" institution is one such institutional influence. The educational institutions generally (and this includes the elementary, high school, college and professional music schools) bear the full guilt of mechanical teaching, where facts are memorized and skills drilled--the way a dog would be taught a repertory of tricks. **THE LEARNING OF SINGING OR INSTRUMENT PLAYING CANNOT BE DIVORCED FROM THE LIVING CONTENT OF THE MUSIC.**

(b) Our ears are filled every day with canned music's immortal gift to American culture: the crooning style of singing (a second institutional influence). The crooning style of singing is singing with the guts taken out--with life and reality sucked from the pulse of the music. What is left then, is no longer music --any more than the man's shadow is the man. There remains only the superficial outward appearance of its full-blooded living relative. A chorus must break down this destructive influence before real singing becomes a fact.

(c) The third institutional influence is that of American church choir singing. Ever since the American Revolution, the churches have tended to become more and more institutionalized--even commercialized. That is, they have tended to become less and less a place where people come together to express, in a collective and spontaneous fashion, their own humanity. The consequent dichotomy between the feelings and the content of the church service becomes more and more translated in the singing of the church choir, whose inarticulate and inhibited singing has become a reflection of the general decline of religious feeling in religious institutions. Thus it is that timid and lifeless performances of the great religious choral works of Bach, Handel, etc., have been more the rule than the exception.

Negro church choir singing has been a notable and important exception to this tendency. The Negro church has been a place, especially in the South, where the Negro people have been able to get together and express more freely their desire for freedom and equality and, in some cases, their militant resistance to slavery and oppression. Thus they have a tradition of spontaneous, alive singing. The influences of Negro songs and singing is playing an important role in the building of a healthy singing tradition in America.

(to be continued)

50

RIO GRANDE

One of the most beautiful of the English sea chanteys. Its lyrical melody practically sings itself.

Slow and Flowing Eb Cm Bb Cm

Oh— say were you ev - er in Ri - o Grande?

Gm Cm Gm

oh, Rio It's there that the ri - ver flows

Cm Gm Chorus Ab B7

down gold-en sand. And we're bound for the Ri - o

Eb Bb7 Cm Gm

Grande. Then a - way, love a - way. Way— down

Ab Fm Gm Ab

Rio, so fare ye well my pret ty young

Bb Cm Bb7 Eb

gal, for were bound for the Ri - o Grande.

And goodbye, fare you well, all you ladies of town,
Oh, Rio.

We've left you enough for to buy a silk gown.

CHORUS

So it's pack up your donkey and get under way,

Oh, Rio.

The girls we are leaving can take our half-pay.

CHORUS

Now you Bowery ladies, we'd have you to know,

Oh, Rio.

We're bound to the Southward, O Lord, let us go.

CHORUS

"JUST A LITTLE SIMPLE"

By Jane Ross

"Simple Speaks His Mind", a new musical play at the Club Baron, 132nd St. and Lenox Ave.

"There's a feeling in the air in Harlem."

Jesse B. Simple is speaking his mind -- to Joe, his "personal bartender" -- and to everyone else at the Club Baron (132nd Street and Lenox Ave., NYC). It's a new type of musical -- using the play within a play technique -- where Simple talks to the audience directly, as well as through the characters on the stage. The Committee for the Negro in the Arts has provided a novel and exciting departure from routine night club entertainment both in form and content.



Simple and Joe, characters taken from Langston Hughes' short story, "Simple Speaks His Mind", are used by playwright Alice Childress to bridge the gap between the two one-act plays which comprise "Just A Little Simple".

"Grocery Store", by Les Pine, concerns the efforts of a southern white storekeeper to talk a Negro friend out of voting, while in "Florence", by Miss Childress, a southern Negro mother meets a northern white "liberal" in the south. Both are extremely well-played, and Ken Maginnault's portrayal of Simple really sparkles.

The music in the show is integrally mixed with the drama so that the songs take on an added lustre. "Curlin'" -- about bigots who curl up unnaturally -- says "it's time for your uncurlin'." "Harlem Is A Friend Of Mine" and "Hello and Goodbye" are other fine numbers.

The Committee for the Negro in the Arts hopes that "Simple" will launch a long range program of community cultural activities in Harlem and inspire other communities to do the same. There are certainly ideas and techniques in this production of unquestionable value that mark a firm step toward the development of people's theater.



51 YOU'RE CRAZY

By Malvina Reynolds

Here's a good critique of modern psychology and contemporary politics. It isn't you who has to adjust to the system; make it adjust to you. Sing it with a twinkle in your eye, a worried frown on your face and a lilt in your voice.



It's the peo-ple in the goo - fy bin that's

 sane, It's the peo-ple on the out - side that

 have-n't got a brain. If you rea-ly feel at ease, In ca-

 ra - zy times like these. You're ca - ra - zy.

If dropping bombs is your idea of fun,
 If you're truly represented by the
 quacks in Washington,
 If you read the daily press
 Without screaming "What a mess!"
 You're ca-ra-zy.

Oh it isn't that you think you are a
 duck,
 And it isn't that your mother was
 frightened by a truck,
 Our whole world is on the blink,
 And that's what makes you think
 You're ca-ra-zy.

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THE PERFECT CHRISTMAS GIFT- A SUBSCRIPTION TO

Here is a thoughtful gift for the Xmas season -- the songs that will help bring "peace on earth" sent each month. Simply send your check or money order, together with the name and address of the person for whom you are getting the subscription to People's Artists, 106 E. 14th St., NYC, and we'll do the rest. Subscriptions are \$2.00 a year.



IN ADDITION: People's Artists will send a beautiful, personal Christmas card to the recipient of your gift subscription, free of charge.

52

LA FIROLERA

As sung by
Jenny Wells

This song, sung by the Mexican-American people in the San Cristobal Valley in New Mexico, became very popular throughout the Southwest a few years ago. Sing it freely and lyrically but with strong accents on the first beat of each measure.

Brightly D G

My poor hus - band's sick with a fe - ver
Mi ma - rid - o es - ta en la ca - ma

A7 D

And I'm on my - knees by his bed.
y yo en la ca - be - ce - ra.

D G

With my ros - ar - y here in my hand,
con el ros - ar - o en o en la ma no,

A7 D

And I pray that he soon may be dead.
pi - dien - do le a Di - os que se mue - ra.

(D) A7

Fi - ro - li - ro - li, fi - ro - li - ro li, fi - ro - li - ro - le - ra,
Fi - ro - li - ro - li, fi - ro - li - ro li, fi - ro - li - ro - le - ra,

A7 D

Fi - ro - li - ro - li, hur - ry up, fi - ro - li - ro - le - ra.
Fi - ro - li - ro - li, ven ac - a, fi - ro - li - ro - le - ra.

D G

Hur - ry up, fi - ro - li - ro - li, hur - ry up, fi - ro - li - ro
Ven a - qui fi - ro - li - ro - li, ven ac a, fi - ro - li - ro

D A7 D

la, for your lov - er is wait - ing out - side.
la, Ya tu a - man - te es - per - an - do se est - a.

And now my poor husband has died,
And the devil has hauled him away,
I hope that he's paying his hide
For the beatings he gave me each day.

Ya mi marido se murio,
Y el diablo se lo llevo,
Ahora se estara pagando
Las patadas que me dio.



Record review

by Jerry Ross

Folkways Records have released albums 1301, Folk Music of the Ukraine and 1416, Folk Music of the Middle-East for an audience interested in the history and development of music. We believe "Sing Out" readers have the ears for these discs, and this reviewer suggests that every person interested 1) in music of the Ukraine and the Middle-East or 2) in the development of modern music of the Near East or 3) in the development of temporal music from the ancient ethnic forms (still existent as recorded in album 1416) through the music of the Hebrew Orthodox ritual to the present by way of the masters of temporal-secular music, Monteverdi, Buxtehude and Bach, would do well to get these albums and add them to their collections.

Singers will be extremely interested in the varied effects used by the authentic folk-singers (the records were cut on location.) Some of them (from the mountain regions of Azborigistan) start their songs on a high C, go to the E above, drop to a lower octave, and then return to the original high intensity.

The instruments used by the artists date back to at least the 14th Century when it is known that Armenian minstrels covered the countryside and even advanced to a state where they organized themselves into small orchestras of string (plucked and bowed) and percussion instruments.

Comprehensive notes by Henry Cowell, Harold Courlander, and Moses Asch enhance the value of these records to the listener.

* *Recommended listening* *



Ralph Ditchik has organized a class for choral conductors. Members exchange experiences and problems at weekly sessions. Group also makes assignments to choruses for conductors looking for experience. SING OUT readers who may be interested should write to Ralph Ditchik care of this publication.

Hats off this month to the YPA Caravan group, an organization of over a dozen young people, Negro and white, who have been singing songs for peace and democracy to street-corner audiences for the past few months. They were especially active in the recent election campaign. Incidentally, the group is looking for a choral director. Interested? Write to YPA, 56 W. 45th St., NYC.

Rumor has it that a group of radio and television stars who were smeared in the notorious "Red Channels" are countering with their own publication. Expect to call it "Red Flannels". That's really looking under the bed.

Betty Sanders, chairman of People's Artists, currently in Warsaw at the World Peace Congress. Due home in January.

DEPT. OF FOLK MUSIC GOING COMMERCIAL: Major record companies rushing out with versions of "The Roving Kind", which will attempt to duplicate fabulous success of "Good Night Irene" on the jukeboxes. Readers can get one of the original versions -- "The Fireship" -- in Vol. 3, No. 1 of the People's Songs Bulletin. Cost 35¢. Just write to SING OUT, 106 E. 14th St., NYC.

Christmas Season means gifts for family and friends. A year's subscription to SING OUT seems like a natural -- especially with gift Christmas card sent free.

ENGLISH LYRICS FOR BASTA YA

Due to difficulties of space, the English lyrics to BASTA YA! were omitted from the last issue of SING OUT. If you missed the original, you can get the music and Spanish words for this Puerto Rican song of protest

by ordering the October issue of SING OUT from People's Artists, 106 East 14th St., NYC. Just send 25¢.

Below is the English translation by Arthur Kevers and George Levine.

CHORUS:

Basta ya! Basta ya!
Yankee says he's my good neighbor.
Basta ya! Basta ya!
Takes the fruit of my hard labor.

From the first faint light of morning,
To the setting of the sun,
In the sugar fields I labor --
But of sugar I have none.
There is no meat for my children,
And our only food is rice,
Wall Street bankers take the dollars,
Puerto Ricans pay the price.

CHORUS

In the mansion lives the Yankee,
In the slum I'm forced to dwell,

But the men who rule my country,
Tell the people, "Go to Hell".
Now I do not want to govern
Either New York or Washington,
And I don't want Yankee masters
In San Juan or Bayamon.

CHORUS

I do not want U. S. statehood,
Colonies are not for me,
What I want is independence --
Puerto Rico must be free!
Fifty years the Yanks have ruled us,
Now at last as one we cry:
Let us stand and fight united,
Make the Yankee say goodbye!

CHORUS

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Cisco Houston
Josh White

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